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AUTHOR Singh, Sergit
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ABSTRACT

School improvement and self-evaluation efforts in Negari Brunei Darussalam are highlighted in this paper, which focuses on those efforts undertaken since the Ministry of Education's 1990 plan to review the administration of national schools. A questionnaire administered to all primary and secondary schools and colleges elicited information about school administration, personnel, workloads, specialization and turnover, the state of physical facilities, extracurricular activities, and school/community relations. School improvement goals are to provide teacher inservice training and additional resources, reconstitute the role of primary and secondary school heads, and improve curriculum and materials. Appendices contain eight statistical tables dealing with the topics of population, sex, age, education level, the labor force, school buildings, government expenditure on education, and the number of candidates sitting and passing public examinations. (12 references) (LMI)

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SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS AND SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT IN NEGARA BRUNEI DARUSSALAM

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Dr. Sergit Singh
Department of Educational Foundations
Faculty of Education
Universiti Brunei Darussalam
BRUNEI DARUSSALAM

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School Effectiveness and School Improvement in Negara Brunei Darussalam

Sergit Singh
Department of Educational Foundations
Faculty of Education
Universiti Brunei Darussalam

ABSTRACT

School self-review or evaluation, meaning the process whereby the school reflects upon and assesses its own work, can be a powerful strategy for improving the teaching and learning process in schools. It should provide a mechanism whereby the school personnel can make an assessment of it and decide what should be the priorities for development. It should also foster and enhance the school's capacity for problem-solving.

In Negara Brunei Darussalam,over a ten-year period, 1980 - 1989, the number of schools has increased from 167 to 189, an overall increase of 13%. Simultaneously, the number of students enrolled in these schools has increased from 54,857 to 71,711,an overall increase of 30.7%. The estimated recurrent expenditure on the Ministry of Education over this decade increased three-fold from B$99.4 million to B$ 303.17 million. The increasing financial support for the educational enterprise has been a major factor of government concern to reform schools and make them more accountable and effective. The efforts to reform schools have also been related to other concerns like increasing standards and expectations of the public for quality education; defining and prescribing curricular content and materials,especially relating to English,Science and Mathematics ; assessing and improving the head's leadership role in school management and administration.

In early 1990, the Ministry of Education,Negara Brunei Darussalam, embarked on a scheme to review the management and admibistration of all national schools and colleges with a more positive desire to foster professional development and local initiative in schools. This responsibility has been entrusted to the Schools Inspectorate Division of the Ministry of Education. In June 1990, all primary and secondary schools and colleges in the State were required to complete a detailed questionnaire, prepared by the Inspectorate, on aspects of school management and administration (Forms PPS 1 & 2). The questionnaire comprised a list of questions which guided staff's information-gathering activities. The qustions were broad in scope and covered the following six areas : school administration ; staff strength ; work load ; specialisation and turnover ; state of physical facilities,including library and hostel,if relevant ; extra-curricular activities of the school ; and school-community relations.

In view of the large number of schools and colleges in the national survey, a detailed picture of the requirements of each school,from the point of view of improvement,would of necessity take a considerable amount of time.

Enhancing the effectiveness of classroom teachers, reconstituting the role and function of primary and secondary school heads and improving the subject content and materials will be the cornerstone of serious school improvement efforts by the Ministry of Education,Negara Brunei Darussalam,during the next few years.

Introduction

School self-review or evaluation, meaning the process whereby the school reflects upon and assesses its own work, can be a powerful strategy for school improvement and promotion of institutional change (McMahon 1986, Nuttall 1981,1986). It should provide a mechanism whereby the school personnel can gather, analyse and interpret a wide range of evidence relating to various aspects of the school's aims, functioning and achievement and decide what should be the priorities for development. The exercise could considerably enhance the school's capacity for problem-solving.

In order to be effective, evaluation must be a regular component of the management cycle of a school (Caldwell and Spinks 1986, 1988). It is contended that evaluation is essential both for purposes of school improvement and for accountability (Glassman 1981), without which many schools will consequently fail to produce effective educational change.

Negara Brunei Darussalam is an independent and sovereign state located in North Borneo. It is a relatively small but prosperous country, having a land area of 5765 sq km/2232 sq miles and a population of 249,000 in mid-1989.[1] 57% of the population (141,800) is under the age of 25 years, and of these 50.6% or 71,711 are still in school.[2]

Brunei Darussalam's economy is heavily dependent on oil and gas ; this industry accounts for over 90% of the government revenue, almost 80% of the Gross Domestic Product at current prices and virtually all the exports of the country.[3] As a nation with a population of 249,000, it enjoys one of the highest per capita incomes in the world, B$38,021 or approximately US$20,000, in 1985.[4] Like many countries of the Middle East, the increased prosperity and inevitable development plans and effort has meant that the nation has had to import foreign professional and skilled labour to meet the manpower needs ; in 1986, out of the 90,800 labour force on record, 34,100 or 37.5% were foreign workers and this dependency on foreign workers was projected to increase to 37,600 out of a total work force of 110,100 by 1990.[5] This heavy dependency on expatriate workers and the apparent tragic lack of local educated men and women

has meant that the economic relationship of the education system to the manpower needs of the community it serves has become dramatically clear, and the problem will remain dormant until such time enough Bruneians are educated and trained in professions and occupations now held by expatriates. At present,institutions of higher learning in Brunei Darussalam can only cater for a limited number and types of academic and technical courses. The provision of higher education has been highly dependent on overseas educational institutions,notably the United Kingdom. The establishment of Universiti Brunei Darussalam in October 1985 and the Institute of Technology Brunei in January 1986 providing courses of study at degree and diploma levels, is designed to accelerate the required manpower needs. The need arises to train the available local manpower to work in the fields of commerce and industry as skilled artisans,masons,technicians and craftsmen.

The need for school evaluation

In the light of this background scenario,the State has experienced rapid quantitative and qualitative expansion in schooling in the past three and a half decades since English education was introduced in 1953. The past decades have also seen commendable government efforts in (a) providing technical and vocational education through the establishment in phases of vocational and technical schools,colleges and an Institute, though only a relatively small proportion of students, 1287 out of the State student population of 71,711 or 1.8%, were enrolled in these institutions in 1989[6], and (b) Islamic religious education in keeping with its status as a Malay,Islamic Monarchy.

Over a ten-year period, 1980 - 1989, the number of schools has increased from 167 to 189, an overall increase of 13%.[7] Simultaneously, over the same period, the number of students enrolled in these schools has increased from 54,857 to 71,711, an overall increase of 30.7%.[8] The estimated recurrent expenditure on the Ministry of Education over this decade increased three-fold from B$99.4 million to B$303.17 million.[9]

The increasing financial support for the educational enterprise has been a major factor of government concern to reform schools and colleges and make them more accountable and effective. Other reasons advanced that reflect government concern in improving schools have been :

(a) the increasing standards and expectations of the public for quality education,

(b) defining and prescribing new curricular content and material that before independence on January 1 1984 was regarded as being distinctly 'colonial' in outlook and intent, the need being distinctly felt in the teaching and learning of English, Science and Mathematics,

(c) a low pass rate in important public examinations. In 1989, for example, in the Brunei-Cambridge G.C.E. 'O' level examination, only 12.4% of Malay-medium students passed while the pass rate for English-medium students was 48.3% ('Pass' being defined as passing at least 3 'O' level subjects). In the same year, in the GCE 'A' level examination,there was a 51.9% pass rate recorded for English-medium students and a 78% pass rate for Malay-medium students (a 'Pass' meant passing at least one 'A' levelsubject which doesn't explain much about academic ability).[10]

(d) assessing and improving the quality of teaching in the classroom,

(e) improving the head's leadership role in school management and administration.

Implementation

In early 1990,the Ministry of Education,Negara Brunei Darussalam, embarked on a scheme to review the management and administration of all national schools and colleges with a more positive desire to foster professional development and local initiative in these schools. This responsibility has been entrusted to the Schools Division of the Ministry of Education. In June 1990,primary and secondary schools and colleges were required to complete a detailed questionnaire (Forms PPS 1 & 2) prepared by the Inspectorate, on most important aspects of school management and functioning. The questionnaire comprised a list of questions which guided staff's information-gathering activities. The questions covered the

following six areas : school administration ; staff strength ; work-load, specialisation and turnover ; state of physical facilities, including library and hostel, if relevant ; extra-curricular activities of the school ; school discipline ; and school-community relations.

The schools evaluation exercise is regarded as a 'pilot project'; it is envisaged that in future school evaluation, the questionnaire is to be refined and improved to include curriculum, teaching quality and evaluation and testing. In view of the large number of schools and colleges in the national survey, a detailed picture of the requirements of each school, from the point of view of improvement, would of necessity take some time.

Conclusion

Enhancing the effectiveness of classroom teachers through in-service training and provision of more resources, reconstituting the role and function of primary and secondary school heads and improving the subject content and materials will be the strategy and cornerstone of serious school improvement efforts by the Ministry of Education, Negara Brunei Darussalam, during the next few years.

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Other references

1 *Brunei Darussalam Statistical Yearbook 1989, p. 9 and p.25* (Appendix 1 and 2).

2 Ibid., p.30 and p.158 (Appendix 3 and 4)

3 *Fifth National Development Plan : 1986 - 1990.* Economic Planning Unit, Ministry of Finance, Negara Brunei Darussalam, p. 1

4 Ibid., p. 5

5 Ibid., p. 14 (Appendix 5)

6 *Brunei Darussalam Statistical Yearbook 1987, op. cit., p. 158* (Appendix 4)

7 Ibid., p. 156 (Appendix 6)

8 Ibid., p. 158 (Appendix 4)

9 Ibid., p. 165 (Appendix 7)

10 Ibid., p. 167 (Appendix 8)

Appendix 1

1.1 AREA, POPULATION AND POPULATION DENSITY BY DISTRICT, 1989

DESCRIPTION	UNIT	ALL DISTRICT	DISTRICT			
			Brunei/Muara	Belait	Tutong	Temburong
Area	Sq. Kilometres	5,765	571	2,724	1,166	1,304
Population Total	Persons	249,000	153,200	58,100	28,600	9,100
By Sex:						
Male		128,600	78,200	30,600	14,800	5,000
Female		120,400	75,000	27,500	13,800	4,100
By Race:						
Malay		171,300	115,300	26,100	23,600	6,300
Other Indigenous		13,100	3,500	6,200	2,000	1,400
Chinese		44,400	23,400	18,000	2,100	900
Others		20,200	11,000	7,800	900	500
Sex Ratio	Male per 1,000 Females	1,068	1,043	1,113	1,072	1,220
Population Density	Persons per Sq. Kilometres	43	268	21	25	7

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Appendix 2

1.2 MID YEAR POPULATION ESTIMATES

YEAR	POPULATION			POPULATION DENSITY (PERSONS PER SQ. KM)			SEX RATIO (MALES PER 1,000 FEMALES)
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	
1978 "	173,000	92,302	80,698	30	16	14	1,144
1979 "	179,010	95,529	83,481	31	17	14	1,144
1980 "	185,220	98,860	86,360	32	17	15	1,145
1981 (Census)	192,832	102,942	89,890	34	18	16	1,145
1982 (Estimate)	200,400	107,000	93,400	35	19	16	1,146
1983 "	207,900	111,200	96,700	36	19	17	1,150
1984 "	215,900	115,600	100,300	38	20	17	1,153
1985 "	221,900	118,580	103,320	39	21	18	1,148
1986 "	226,300	116,800	109,500	39	20	19	1,067
1987 "	233,800	120,600	113,200	41	21	20	1,065
1988 "	241,400	124,600	116,800	42	22	20	1,067
1989 "	249,000	128,600	120,400	43	22	21	1,068

Appendix 3

1.6 TOTAL POPULATION BY SEX AND AGE-GROUP (Continued)

AGE-GROUP (IN YEARS)	POPULATION IN 1986			POPULATION IN 1987			POPULATION IN 1988			POPULATION IN 1989		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
0 - 4	30,500	15,400	15,100	31,400	16,000	15,400	32,600	16,600	16,000	33,400	17,200	16,200
5 - 9	28,000	14,400	13,600	29,000	14,800	14,200	29,500	15,100	14,400	30,500	15,600	14,900
10 - 14	24,500	12,100	12,400	25,500	12,800	12,700	26,000	13,100	12,900	26,100	13,200	12,900
15 - 19	25,400	12,600	12,800	23,900	11,800	12,100	23,300	11,500	11,800	24,100	11,900	12,200
20 - 24	26,000	13,800	12,200	26,900	14,000	12,900	28,000	14,300	13,700	27,700	14,000	13,700
25 - 29	23,900	12,500	11,400	25,000	13,200	11,800	25,500	13,800	11,700	26,100	14,100	12,000
30 - 34	19,300	10,000	9,300	20,500	10,600	9,900	21,700	11,100	10,600	22,800	11,700	11,100
35 - 39	13,600	7,300	6,300	14,700	7,700	7,000	15,900	8,400	7,500	17,100	9,100	8,000
40 - 44	8,500	4,600	3,900	9,400	5,100	4,300	10,100	5,400	4,700	11,300	5,900	5,400
45 - 49	6,900	3,800	3,100	7,700	4,200	3,500	8,000	4,300	3,700	8,200	4,500	3,700
50 - 54	5,600	2,800	2,800	5,600	2,900	2,700	6,000	3,200	2,800	6,300	3,400	2,900
55 - 59	4,300	2,300	2,000	4,800	2,500	2,300	5,000	2,600	2,400	5,300	2,600	2,700
60 - 64	3,200	1,800	1,400	3,300	1,800	1,500	3,500	1,900	1,600	3,500	1,900	1,600
65 - 69	2,100	1,200	900	2,400	1,400	1,000	2,500	1,500	1,000	2,700	1,600	1,100
70 & Over	4,500	2,200	2,300	3,700	1,800	1,900	3,800	1,800	2,000	3,900	1,900	2,000
All Age-Groups	226,300	116,800	109,500	233,800	120,600	113,200	241,400	124,600	116,800	249,000	128,600	120,400

Appendix 4

10.4 NUMBER OF STUDENTS BY LEVEL OF EDUCATION

YEAR	TOTAL		KINDERGARTEN		PRIMARY/ PREPARATORY		SECONDARY		TECHNICAL/ VOCATIONAL		TEACHER TRAINING		INSTITUTE		UNIVERSITY	
	Total	Male	Total	Male	Total	Male	Total	Male	Total	Male	Total	Male	Total	Male	Total	Male
1978	52,124	26,869	2,661	1,378	33,053	17,169	15,571	7,820	306	292	533	210	-	-	-	-
1979	53,155	27,357	6,330	3,322	29,934	15,546	15,996	8,002	294	269	601	218	-	-	-	-
1980	54,857	28,271	6,760	3,509	30,513	15,966	16,532	8,183	459	388	593	225	-	-	-	-
1981	56,645	28,992	6,879	3,519	31,677	16,558	16,805	8,140	570	476	714	299	-	-	-	-
1982	57,928	29,652	7,224	3,742	31,682	16,512	17,698	8,583	647	534	677	281	-	-	-	-
1983	60,328	30,847	7,345	3,943	32,771	17,126	18,854	9,072	704	561	654	245	-	-	-	-
1984	61,932	31,608	7,655	3,918	34,373	17,982	18,565	8,895	748	601	591	212	-	-	-	-
1985	63,332	32,404	8,055	4,237	34,815	18,171	18,889	9,025	975	747	598(1)	224	-	-	-	-
1986	65,519	33,488	7,958	4,164	36,983	19,173	18,714	9,036	1,169	839	519	169	-	-	176	107
1987	65,081	33,436	8,671	4,430	37,258	19,519	17,130	8,251	1,170	879	508	165	-	-	344	192
1988	69,202	35,303	8,259	4,222	39,226	20,376	19,092	9,121	1,238	857	242	177	210	134	935	416
1989	71,711	36,747	8,664	4,455	40,611	21,250	19,761	9,492	1,287	924	278	103	210	130	900	393

Source: Ministry of Education.

Note : (1) Including 22 males and 11 female teachers for Institute of Higher Education (Degree level in B.Ed and B.A. Education)

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APPENDIX 5

TABLE 9 : LABOUR FORCE

(THOUSANDS)

LABOUR FORCE	1981 CENSUS	1986	1990
Local Labour Force	45.9	56.7	72.5
a) Male	32.7	39.1	45.6
b) Female	13.2	17.6	26.9
1.1 Citizens	37.8	46.9	60.7
a) Male	26.9	32.2	37.8
b) Female	10.9	14.7	22.9
1.2 Permanent Residents	8.1	9.8	11.8
a) Male	5.8	6.9	7.8
b) Female	2.3	2.9	4.0
. Temporary Residents	24.8	34.1	37.6
TOTAL	70.7	90.8	110.1

Appendix 6

10.2 NUMBER OF SCHOOL BUILDINGS BY TYPE OF SCHOOL

SCHOOL	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989
Total	159	159	167	176	174	167	171	170	180	185	184	189
Government School:	132	132	135	139	141	136	136	138	145	144	144	145
Kindergarten/Pre-School / Primary/Preparatory	113	113	115	118	120	114	114	116	118	118	117	118
Secondary (1)	14	14	14	15	15	16	16	16	18	17	19	19
Technical/Vocational (2)	3	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	5	5	5	5
Teacher Training (3)	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	1
Institute	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	1
University	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	1
Private Schools:	27	27	32	37	33	31	35	32	35	41	40	44
Kindergaten / Primary/Preparatory / Secondary	27	27	32	37	33	31	35	32	35	41	40	44

Source : Ministry Of Education

Notes :.(1) Young Army Berakas Garrison is included

(2) Agriculture Training Centre and Nursing College are included

(3) From 1988 onwards, Religious Training Teacher only since the other was upgraded to Institute of Education and becomes part of the University.

Appendix 7

10.11 GOVERNMENT RECURRENT EXPENDITURE ON EDUCATION

Million Dollars

TYPE OF EXPENDITURE	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989*
PERSONNAL ENROLMENT	35.08	37.31	42.74	52.63	58.50	92.15	93.00	117.78	135.10	131.67	160.73	166.21
OTHER CHARGES ANNUALLY RECURRENT	32.77	40.21	48.11	61.31	55.99	87.21	89.57	77.52	82.38	91.77	111.46	100.25
OTHER CHARGES SPECIAL EXPENDITURE	2.77	5.27	8.56	5.92	5.01	31.89	28.40	30.15	25.36	19.44	23.91	36.71
TOTAL	70.62	82.80	99.40	119.85	119.50	211.25	210.97	225.45	242.83	242.89	296.10	303.17

Source : Ministry of Education

Note : * Estimate

Appendix 8

10.13 NUMBER OF CANDIDATES SITTING AND PASSING PUBLIC EXAMINATIONS

EXAMINATION	1987		1988		1989	
	TOTAL CANDIDATES	PASS	TOTAL CANDIDATES	PASS	TOTAL CANDIDATES	PASS
Brunei Junior Certificate:						
Malay Medium	343	241	486	327	136	60
English Medium	3,083	2,655	2,538	2,110	3,124	2,614
Brunei Cambridge G.C.E. 'O' Level: (Passing at least 3 '0')						
Malay Medium	633	147	567	144	445	55
English Medium	3,175	1,506	3,100	1,609	3,359	1,623
G.C.E. 'A' level (Passing at least 1 'A'):						
Brunei-Cambridge (English Medium)	228	83	502	274	538	279
Singapore-Cambridge (Malay Medium)	1,118	801	822	569	699	545
London G.C.E. 'O' Level (Passing at least 3 'O'	474	112	323	108	404	69
London G.C.E. 'A' Level (Passing at least 1 'O')	136	21	101	27	73	19
London Chamber of Commerce	109	32	158	66	87	41
Royal Society of Arts	300	127	668	186	715	201
City and Guilds	785	366	922	536 (1)	1,205	478

Source : Examination Board Office, Ministry of Education.

Note : (1) May - June and December 1988

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